

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 01721 281818Z

43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /134 W

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R 281500Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4892

INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, BC, SF

SUBJ: SASO STUDENTS IN BOTSWANA

REF: GABORONE 1546

1. JOHANNESBURG SUNDAY EXPRESS OF 25 NOVEMBER CARRIED STORY DATELINE DURBAN WHICH STATED THAT SIX SASO LEADERS WHO FLED SA HAVE QUOTE SLIPPED INTO A EUROPEAN COMMUNIST COUNTRY TO UNDERGO TRAINING UNQUOTE. STORY ALSO STATES THAT THE SIX DID NOT DISCLOSE THEIR PRESENCE TO BOTSWANA AUTHORITIES AND LAID LOW IN BOTSWANA FOR SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE BEING FLOWN OUT THROUGH TANZANIA.

2. A CHECK OF BOTSWANA OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH THE SASO CASE REVEALS THAT EXPRESS STORY IS LARGELY A FABRICATION. AT PRESENT, FIVE OF SIX PERSONS MENTIONED IN ARTICLE ARE IN LOBATSE, BOTSWANA (ABRAHAM ONKGOPOTSE TIRO; HARRY RANWEDZI NEMGWEKHULU; BOKWE MAFUNA; MOSI NOSIPHO MATSHOBA; AND DENNIS TOMEKA MAFOLE). THE OTHER SASO MEMBER MENTIONED IN STORY, JOYCE SIKAKANE, TO BEST KNOWLEDGE

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PAGE 02 GABORO 01721 281818Z

GOB, IS NOT IN BOTSWANA. IN ADDITION TO THE FIVE, THREE OTHER

SASO MEMBERS - VINCENT MATLOU; ABIATHAR MAPENGO;
AND PETROS MANDELA MAGUBANE - ARE ALSO IN LOBATSE. A
NINTH PERSON, ROSEMARY ARNOLD, HAS RETURNED TO SOUTH AFRICA.

3. THE SASO EIGHT HAVE APPLIED FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM IN BOTSWANA
AND A GOB OFFICIAL SAYS THEIR CASE IS BEING CONSIDERED. THEY
HAVE NOT APPROACHED THE UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE AND
THEY ARE NOT RECEIVING ALLOWANCES FROM GOB OR ANY OTHER USUAL
SOURCE SUCH AS UNHCR OR BOTSWANA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL. GOB
IS NOT ACTIVELY SEEKING THEIR DEPARTURE TO ANOTHER BLACK-RULED
COUNTRY.

4. COMMENT: GOB ATTITUDE TOWARD SASO EIGHT COULD BE CALLED
ONE OF BENIGN NEGLECT INCLUDING NO ACTION ON SASO REQUESTS
REFTEL. A DECISION ON ASYLUM FOR EXAMPLE IS UNLIKELY IN THE
NEAR FUTURE AS GOB HOPES THE GROUP ITSELF WILL ARRANGE, OR
HAVE A LIBERATION MOVEMENT HANDLE, THEIR TRAVEL TO A COUNTRY
WILLING TO RECEIVE THEM. MEANWHILE, THE SASO MEMBERS REPORT
THEIR PRESENCE ON A REGULAR SCHEDULE TO BOTSWANA POLICE IN
LOBATSE.
NELSON

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